

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

The specification as amended below with replacement paragraphs shows added text with underlining and deleted text with ~~strike through~~.

Please REPLACE the paragraph beginning at page 37, line 25 through page 38, line 13, with the following paragraph:

FIG. 33 illustrates branch element retrieval process, S5, shown in FIG. 31. In step S5, the branch element retrieval unit 210 performs a branch element retrieval process. In the branch element retrieval process, the end-connected-element retrieval process (step S6), the crossed-element retrieval process (step S7), and the shape-corrected branch element retrieval process (step S8) are sequentially performed as shown in Fig. 33. The end-connected-element retrieval unit 212 performs the end-connected-element retrieval process (step S6), the crossed-element retrieval unit 211 performs the crossed-element retrieval process (step S7), and the shape-corrected branch element retrieval unit 213 performs the shape-corrected branch element retrieval process (step S8).